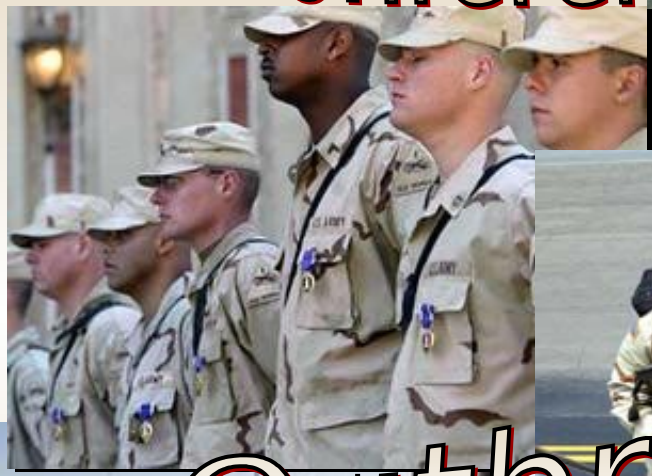
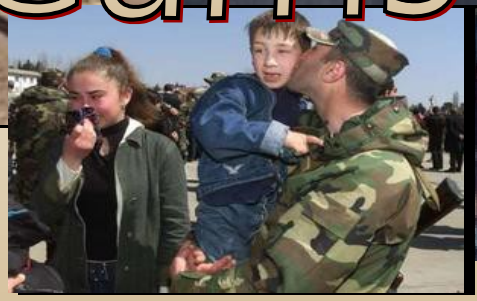
Supporting Our Troops

Army Family Action Plan Conference





Outbrief to FWA Garrison XO

20 October 2004

Helena Hilliard

Community Services

Most Valuable Services
Least Valuable Services

- Most Valuable
  1. Housing
  2. Medical/Dental
  3. Childcare/FCC
  4. On-post transportation
  5. AER

- Least Valuable
  1. Post TV Station
  2. Post Newspaper

Community Services
Bus Stop Shelters for FWA School Students

- **Scope: There are no adequate bus-stop shelters to provide sufficient protection for FWA students traveling to and from school. Students attend ¾ of the school year in darkness where temperatures can reach -50º, with added risk of roaming wildlife. Adequate shelter is needed for the safety of students traveling to and from school.**

- **Recommendation: Provide well-lit bus-stop shelters in proportion to students utilizing each bus stop. Investigate the possibility of heating the bus stop shelters.**

Community Services
Fort Wainwright Public Transportation System

- **Scope: Fort Wainwright has an influx of service members and dependents without personal transportation. The lack of transportation impacts the quality of life and morale of the soldiers and families. Inclement weather, displacement of needed resources, and inability to access off-post establishments make conducting daily tasks difficult.**

- **Recommendation: Provide a public transportation system for the Fort Wainwright community including scheduled stops on and off post.**

Community Services
Indoor playground for Children and Families

- **Scope: There is not an indoor playground for families with children ages 0 – 12 to play together. Fort Wainwright experiences long frigid winters where children can only play outside for short periods of time. As a result of long periods of confinement, families are subsequent to health risks such as lethargy, SADD and cabin fever.**

- **Recommendation: Provide an extensive year-round indoor playground. This includes age-appropriate equipment, seating and snack area.**

Community Services
Army Community Service Building

- **Scope: The displacement and mediocre conditions of ACS, AFTB, and FRG buildings deter service members and families from utilizing these resources. The buildings that are currently utilized lack handicap access, adequate office space for staff, and a play area for children. The conditions prevent ACS and related programs from providing quality services to the community.**

- **Recommendation: Furnish a combined center to conduct ACS related classes, programs and meetings while providing a space for children to play.**

Army Family Action Plan
Soldier Family Civilian
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Families Soldiers Civilians

Sean Tu

Troop Support
Most Valuable Services
Least Valuable Services

- Most Valuable
  1. Medical/Dental
  2. Housing
  3. Physical Fitness Center (PFC)
  4. Post Exchange (PX)
  5. Army Emergency Relief (AER)

- Least Valuable
  1. Post/Installation TV (Channel 5)
  2. Post/Installation News Paper (Alaska Post)
  3. Military Police Services

Troop Support
Build Multipurpose Theatre

- **Scope: Fort Wainwright currently does not have a facility large enough to accommodate military briefings, community events and recreational activities for soldiers and their families. Providing such a facility would increase readiness, morale and cost effectiveness. For example: Deployment briefings, first-run movies, and one central location for all post activities.**

- **Recommendation: Build an auditorium suitable for battalion-sized functions.**

Troop Support
Quality of Life in Barracks

- **Scope: Soldiers are being required to live by outdated standards. Overcrowding in barracks causes lack of privacy and storage for military and personal equipment – for example 1/17th HHC has 35 soldiers utilizing one latrine. There is no separation between company area and soldiers living in quarters.**

- **Recommendation: Give NCOs options to live in NCO barracks or off post by authorizing BAH/OHA for junior NCOs. Expedite new barracks construction to alleviate current conditions. Find new company operating facility (COF) to free up space and take work away from living environment.**

Troop Support
Command Emphasis on BOSS

- **Scope: The lack of information and education of BOSS is causing the program to be ineffective at unit level organization which in turn causes lack of participation. Limitation in BOSS-sponsored events directly relates to unit participation in fund-raising and volunteer activities. A successful BOSS program is important for Soldier morale and esprit de corps.**

- **Recommendation: Ensure that the command is educated and involved in supporting the BOSS program. Command should be made aware of BOSS-sponsored activities and allow opportunities for maximum participation. BOSS representative should make sure that the information is received by all Soldiers.**

Troop Support
BAS for all Barracks Soldiers

- **Scope: Soldiers do not have the flexibility to eat when and where they choose. Frequently Soldiers choose not to eat at the DFAC and eat at their own expense elsewhere. Providing an alternative would improve morale and promote financial responsibility**

- **Recommendation: Provide financial management classes thru ACS. Debit BAS contingent upon maintaining APFT standard. Use ID Card at commissary as a debit card or at DFAC.**

Army Family Action Plan
Soldier Family Civilian
N
W
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Families Soldiers Civilians

James Johns

Entitlements/Medical
Most Valuable Services
Least Valuable Services

- Most Valuable
  1. Medical & Dental
  2. Housing
  3. Education Center
  4. Commissary
  5. EFMP

- Least Valuable
  1. Golf Course
  2. Post/Installation TV
  3. Theme Restaurant

Entitlements/Medical
Dependent use of Montgomery GI Bill (MGIB)

- **Scope: Higher education is a financial hardship to Soldiers and family. The Army provides the GI Bill for Soldiers, which cannot be shared with family members. Service members who have completed their higher education may choose not to use their GI Bill. Transferring the GI Bill to family members, to include spouse, children & step-children, allow Soldiers to have optimal use of their time in service. Distributing funds improves quality of life during and after military service.**

- **Recommendation: Authorize family members use of the MGIB.**

Entitlements/Medical
A One-Time Allowance to Help Families Winterize

- **Scope: Soldiers arriving to Interior Alaska do not have adequate funds to take care of winter needs. Severe weather conditions in Interior Alaska require that vehicles be winterized. This can cost as much as $500 per vehicle. Soldiers must also provide appropriate winter gear for spouse and dependents, which can cost up to $300 per dependent. Children at 6 years and older are required to participate in outdoor recess/activities in temperatures as low as -10º. Winterizing vehicles includes adding special heaters for the battery, oil pan, and engine block which must be plugged in to an outside electrical outlet. Providing a one-time allowance ends the COLA-unique which must be paid back. This allowance will improve the quality of life, reduces health issues and allows the Soldier to be at work and be mission ready.**

- **Recommendation: Provide a one-time allowance that must be applied for during in-processing brief with finance. Recommend $400 per authorized vehicle and $200 per dependent up to 6 dependents.**

Entitlements/Medical
Size of Military Family Housing

- **Scope: The square footage allowed by AR 210-50 does not reflect society's norms. For example, based on AR 210-50, the maximum allowable space for an E1- E6 four bedroom home is only 1350 square feet. The national average for a three-bedroom home in the United States is 2100 – 2400 square feet. Adoption of this recommendation will increase satisfaction with the Army quality of life, morale and retention of Army families.**

- **Recommendation: Increase the maximum and minimum standards for the size of Army housing to the national average. Review and adjust standards every five years.**

Entitlements/Medical
Medical Referral Process

- **Scope: Obtaining a referral is a time consuming process. In order to see a specialist it takes an average of three to five steps. If additional testing is required you must obtain additional referrals. Appointments are not usually made in a timely manner and travel orders are usually cut at the last minute. This causes undue and additional stresses to the Soldier and family. Fixing this problem reduces family stress in a stressful environment.**

- **Recommendation: Fix the total system for medical referral so that appointments and travel arrangements are timely.**

David Wright

Family Services
Most Valuable Services
Least Valuable Services

- Most Valuable
  1. AER
  2. Medical
  3. Commissary
  4. BOSS
  5. Dental

- Least Valuable
  1. Golf Course
  2. Bowling Alley
  3. Auto/Craft Store

Family Services
Paid FRG Liaison/Leader Staff

- **Scope: Due to the Global War on Terrorism, there has been an increased demand on family support group leaders within units across the Army. FRG leader responsibility has outgrown the volunteer capacity and exceeded the availability of service and family members. Due to mission requirements – i.e. pre-deployment, deployment and post-deployment – FRGs are always vital in the family functioning of the unit. Currently unit commanders have the option to appoint a Soldier (E-5 or above) to act as the FRG liaison at the company and battalion level. Typically, a military spouse is asked to act as the FRG leader for the unit. Due to preparation requirements for deployment on soldiers and their family members, the job of Family Readiness Groups becomes overwhelming. The volunteers are thus unable to fulfill job requirements, resulting in low job performance decreased morale and increased level of stress. Initiatives were taken to hire eight positions at the USARPAC level, one of which was given to Fort Wainwright. This person was hired for 15 months during the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2004, and is currently being housed at ACS. Ft. Wainwright has expanded and transformed its brigade, increasing the number of soldiers and family members stationed here. Ft. Wainwright is also undergoing preparations for its Brigade & Battalion level FRG liaison.**

Family Services
Paid FRG Liaison/Leader Staff

- **Recommendation: Hire full-time Brigade & Battalion level FRG liaisons. Replace current company level volunteer FRG leaders with a paid permanent part-time FRG leader. All paid liaison & leader positions are to fulfill all ACS job requirements as well as attend an annual DA-level training.**

Family Services:
Family Involvement During Recruitment Process

- **Scope: There is a lack of information provided to dependents of potential service members at the time of recruitment. The information given to the family members concerning benefits, entitlements, PCS moves, etc. is inconsistent. There are programs in place to train family members, but this knowledge is not received until after arrival at the first duty station. As a result, families have the potential to enter military life unprepared and with false expectations.**

- **Recommendation: Provide standardized information packets specifically for potential service members and their dependents. Offer optional family orientation during the recruitment process to provide information.**

Family Services
Scheduling of Housing Work Order Appointments

- **Scope: When a person calls in a work order he/she is not given a general time frame of when the work order will be filled. Since the maintenance worker may randomly show up Monday – Friday between regular business hours, people are often not home. This makes it necessary for the maintenance worker to leave a note requesting an appointment be scheduled for the repair, wasting valuable time and resources of the government and housing occupants.**

- **Recommendation: Provide customer with a specific day and maximum 4–hour time block when maintenance worker will come at initial call of request for action.**

Abby Raney
Krystal Hart
Maryssa Rotte
Kristine Fisher

Youth
Most Valuable Services
Least Valuable Services

- Most Valuable
  1. PX
  2. Post Shuttle
  3. Commissary
  4. PFC
  5. MP

- Least Valuable
  1. Library
  2. Command Channel
  3. Auto Skills Center

Youth
Extended Hours For MWR Activities

- **Scope: Hours of operation do not take school schedules and holidays into consideration. MWR activities are often limited or closed during hours convenient to students. These services provide minimal usage to youth because of inconsistent and limited hours.**

- **Recommendation: MWR activities should extend their hours to accommodate school holidays and after-school usage. MWR hours should include adequate weekend coverage. MWR hours should be consistent with posted schedule.**

Youth

Lack of Accessible Information for Youth Opportunities

- **Scope: There is a lack of information flow between activity organizers and the participants. When this occurs, many youth miss out on public activities. Sign-upd for these activities go unnoticed and deadlines are missed.**

- **Recommendation: Locally produced teen newspaper with monthly upcoming events to be distributed alongside the Bear Necessities. PEAR (People-engaging Activity Registration) to include Fairbanks and FWA youth opportunities to be conducted.**

Youth
Needed Post Shuttle

- **Scope: There is no public transportation on post. People without transportation have no means of getting around post. Due to the distance between housing and facilities, conditions can become hazardous to pedestrians.**

- **Recommendation: Implement a shuttle that will transport people to various locations on post and the downtown bus depot. Maintain a clearly posted bus schedule. This would increase the well-being of all FWA Soldiers and family members by allowing maximum usage and access of all offered.**

Army Family Action Plan
Soldier Family Civilian
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Families Soldiers Civilians

Dana Abbott

Top Six Active AFAP Issues

1. 307 - Award household goods contracts to moving companies based on their performance and claims history, as well as their cost. Provide full replacement value for lost/damaged household goods.
2. 441 - Implement financial planning education, beginning at the lowest level in Army school systems.
3. 509 - Reduce member cost share to 20% for dental services not already covered at 100% in the TRICARE Dental Program (TDP) and TRICARE Retiree Dental Program (TRDP). Increase maximum annual benefit for TDP and TRDP to $1500.

Top Six Active AFAP Issues (cont.)

4. 526 - Fund the shipment of a second POV for OCONUS tours.
5. 497 - Allow all Soldiers with at least 10 years of service to distribute their Montgomery GI Bill benefits to their dependents.
6. 521 - Allow in-state tuition rates for military family members who reside in a state on military orders and allow family member to retain “in-state” status, once established.

Top Issue Titles

- Going to USARAK and Hawaii
  1. One time allowance to help families winterize
  2. Size of military family housing
  3. Dependent use of MGIB
  4. Family involvement during recruitment process
  5. Paid FRG liaison/leader staff
  6. BAS for all barracks Soldier

- Fort Wainwright
  1. Quality of life in barracks
  2. Medical referral process
  3. Build multi-purpose theatre
  4. FWA public transportation system
  5. Bus-stop shelters for FWA students
  6. Army Community Service building
  7. Command emphasis on BOSS
  8. Indoor playground for children and families
  9. Lack of accessible information for youth opportunities
  10. Scheduling of housing work order appointments
  11. Extended hours for MWR activities
  12. Need post shuttle